

SAC 4061 Saturday  
reviewP - Cousins, Norman  
P - Tucker, Carll  
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# Business Day

The New York Times

AUGUST 8, 1979 - D-1



## Recharging Saturday Review

By N.R. KLEINFELD

Carll Tucker rolled up his shirt sleeves, scooped up a cow bell and rang it. "Meeting. Editorial meeting," he boomed over the thunder of voices in the midtown offices of The Saturday Review magazine.

The thunder continued. "It's impossible to get editors together," Mr. Tucker said with a sigh. "They've become immune even to my cow bell."

Finally, after he had practically kicked the editors into the conference room, the regular Tuesday morning meeting got going. In between a spray of jokes, the editors sort of succeeded in mapping out coming issues.

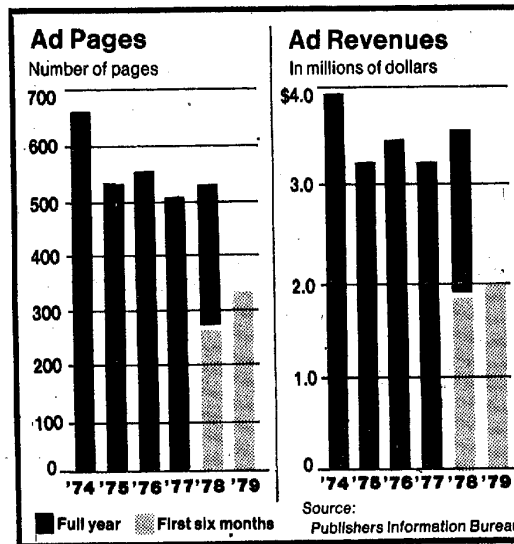
Holding editorial meetings is one of the changes that have come to the genteel literary vehicle that has long been synonymous with Norman Cousins. Although the writing of Mr. Cousins still graces every issue, he of course is no longer the main figure at the Re-

view, not since Carll Tucker, now 27 years old, and a batch of undisclosed investors swept into control in December 1976.

One of the most telling changes is that Mr. Tucker expects the 55-year-old biweekly (circulation: 530,000) to make a bit of money this year, something it has not been in the habit of doing since the hearty 1960's. "I wouldn't say we're going to start a bank," he says, "but we should make between \$100,000 and \$200,000 for the fiscal year ending in September."

The first year Mr. Tucker was in

## Saturday Review



The New York Times / John Sotomayor

Carll Tucker, left, Saturday Review's editor, and James Broadwater, the publisher, in their offices.

charge, he felt that it was the worst idea he had ever had. "The losses went from half a million under Norman to \$1.1 million under me," Mr. Tucker recalls, "and I thought maybe I'd go live in Tahiti." The second year, he blotted out enough red ink to cut the loss back to \$500,000 and resolved to stay in New York.

The Review has often been on shaky ground, but it has somehow always managed to stay afloat. Mr. Cousins groomed it to his literary tastes — global, intellectual, and

Continued on Page D3

# Recharging Saturday Review

Continued From Page D1

ture — under several owners, until it was peddled in 1971 to Nicholas Charney and John Veronis. They concocted a disastrous format that carved the magazine into four separate monthlies. Mr. Cousins, meanwhile, quit and started World magazine. Two years later the Review went bankrupt, and Mr. Cousins snatched it back.

One day, when Mr. Tucker was applying to be theater critic of the Review, Mr. Cousins asked if he would care to buy the magazine for several million dollars. Mr. Tucker thought that would be nice.

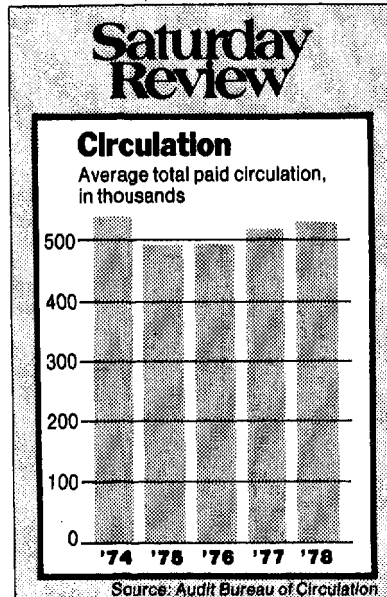
## Competitor to the 'Pretty Books'

Mr. Tucker, a witty man who is on the threshold of slender, vibrates to a somewhat different tune than Mr. Cousins, but he has striven to modify the publication without ruffling its uncommonly loyal readers. Envisioning The Saturday Review as "a magazine of perspective on issues of national concern," he has tried to position it as an advertising competitor of magazines like the New Yorker, Smithsonian and Natural History, which he calls the "pretty books" because of their pleasing look. And he has tried to remove it from association with the smaller-circulation "gray thought books," like The Nation and New Republic. "The gray thought books have not done that well in the last decade," he says.

The magazine's graphics have been spruced up, and the articles have strayed from the essays by well-known figures that tickled the fancy of Mr. Cousins to more conventional, if sometimes dry, journalism. Because Mr. Tucker believes that the Review's readers like not only to think well but also to live well, he inserted a wine column, a restaurant column entitled "Oh, Cuisine!" (the name still draws moans from many employees), a sports column and his own Back Door feature.

What is more, he introduced a Front Runners section comprising short items, which he calls "a thoughtful person's believe it or not." One recent item told of the Temple of Bacchus, in Wells, Me., where the presiding cardinal and bishop serve "roast duckling, sirloin tips, wine, and so forth" for a \$15 donation. Townspeople have been maneuvering to shut the place down, contending that the temple is an attempt to dodge a zoning ordinance barring restaurants.

The magazine's employees were not



The New York Times / Aug. 8, 1979

ablaze with enthusiasm when Mr. Tucker first rolled in, especially since more than three-quarters of them were dismissed. But most who remained have come around. Susan Heath, the managing editor, recalls: "When Caril said at the first meeting that he wanted to have a column on restaurants, just about everybody in the room all but passed out. 'Oh, no, we're going to start looking like House & Garden.' But then he said it would be by a quality writer on a favorite restaurant, and I think it's made a contribution."

## A Man of Means

What of Mr. Cousins? An editorial by him appears in every issue, and he delivers several major pieces a year. Meanwhile, he teaches literature to medical students at the University of California. Initially, he was disgruntled over some of Mr. Tucker's changes. Now, he says: "The magazine's got bite and bounce and interest and importance. When I get it in the mail, I put myself in the place of a reader, and I feel I'm getting my money's worth."

Mr. Tucker is a man of more than comfortable means. His parents founded The Patent Trader, the Westchester County paper. He is the great-grandson of James Brady, the financier who helped start Consolidated Edison. His wife, Diane, is a daughter of R. Peter Straus, director of the Voice of America and former head of radio station WMCA in New York, and of Ellen Sulzberger Straus, who currently heads the station.

But Mr. Tucker has learned to pinch his pennies at the tight-budgeted Review. "One of my proudest boasts," Mr. Tucker says, "is that I kept my costs from fiscal 1978 to fiscal 1979 from rising."

seems predicated on how many ads it pulls from three industries — tobacco, liquor and automotive. The Saturday Review had carried practically none of

these ads. This year, after wooing them vigorously, the Review will run about 270 pages of the three categories; in the past, roughly a dozen pages appeared. All told, Mr. Tucker expects the Review to attract some 700 pages of ads this year, 32 percent more than last year. Ad pages rose 15 percent in the first six months of what has been a good year for magazines, though ad revenues climbed only 7 percent because rates were sliced by 15 percent in January. The magazine's circulation is also up; it stood at 495,000 when Mr. Tucker took over.

James Broadwater, the publisher, explains: "We had to make the magazine more efficient. Madison Avenue had the impression that we had an older, passive audience of intellectual eggheads who didn't consume a thing."

Actually, the Review's readers have gotten younger and a bit better off. In the last few years, the median age has come down to 36.4 from 38. The median income has gone up to \$23,158 from \$19,769.

Media buyers, however, still seem guarded. Joseph Ostrow of Young & Rubicam says, "It is less attractive than during its heyday but more attractive than during its latter period."

"We're progressing," Mr. Tucker contends. "It's like pushing a worm. You push one piece of it, then you move another piece of it. It doesn't all go at once. Finally, you get where you're going."

## Times Elects 2 Officers

The New York Times Company elected two new vice presidents yesterday. David L. Gorham, 46 years old, who joined the Times Company in 1974 as corporate controller, was named a vice president. He continues as controller. Joseph Applegate, 40, was appointed vice president, operations, of The New York Times. He joined The Times in 1976 and became director of